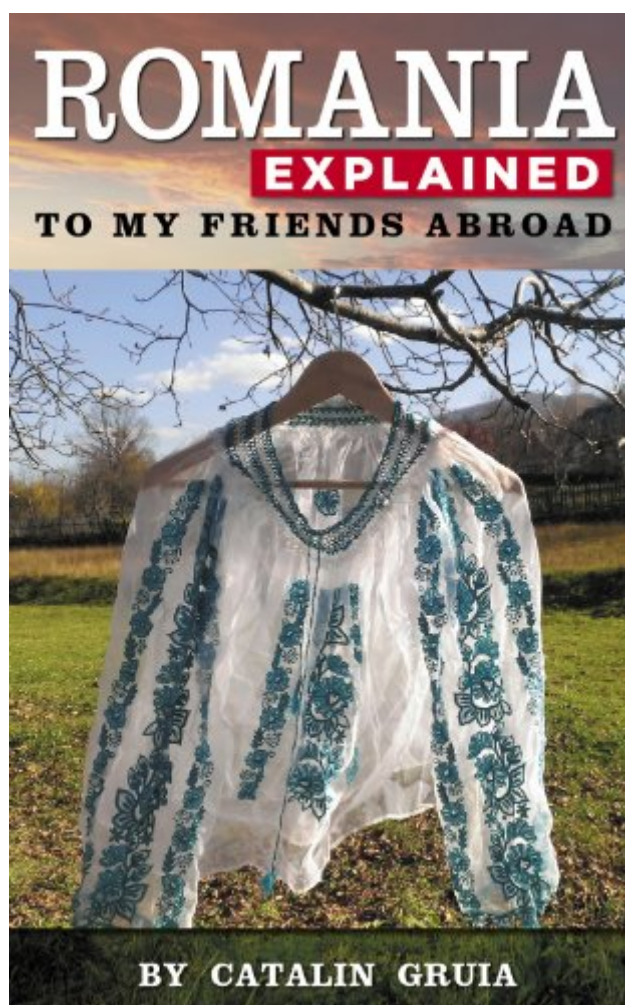


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ROMANIA EXPLAINED TO MY FRIENDS ABROAD: TAKE AWAY ROMANIA



Synopsis

Dear Reader, You should know from the very beginning this is not an exhaustive, academic paper on Romania; nor is it a travel guide of Romania. I'm a simple journalist and this is just my own private Romania – a subjective puzzle of all the things I know from experience to be interesting for foreign tourists. I've been working for the Romanian edition of National Geographic for over 13 years. Mostly because of my job I've met many foreigners – either when they visited Romania or when I went abroad. I guess now I've got more friends from the other side of the Earth than from my native land. I've learned a lot from them and from trying to answer their questions: Do Romanians consider Ceausescu a good or a bad dictator? Are Gypsies dangerous? Where do vampires come from? Why did the Saxons leave Transylvania? How dangerous is it to ride a bicycle in Bucharest? Why do most Romanian surnames end in escu? Where can I find Gerovital? Recommendations, must-see places? And so on... I had to research and prepare myself each and every time, for every curiosity they had. After a while, some of these studies became the essays I've collected in this book. I'm a fan of Montaigne's Essays whose model I've tried to emulate. Now I'm bold enough to think that if you want a bite of Romania and for whatever reason you don't have the stomach or the time to sample it here – for a month, a year or a lifetime – this is exactly the book you need!

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Customer Reviews

The chapters are seemingly arranged in order from longest to shortest. The first two chapters on Dracula and Nicolae Ceaușescu were very helpful. However, the way they were written, as if the writer was recounting a guided tour, was confusing. The rest of the book wasn't worth reading. Some of the chapters were a page long and had absolutely useless information. Some of the writing was clearly from non-native English speakers and grammatical errors that made it difficult to read.

I've been to Romania several times over several years, the author captures it perfectly

as listed and on time

Useful in a different sort of way

excellent intro to Romania, its people, its customs, its places. very well written

I sponsor a child through World Vision in Romania and was hoping to learn more about her country and culture, without having to read a textbook. Unfortunately, I found this book to be very disjointed. There was a relatively large section on Transylvania and on the Saxon influence in Romania, but particularly towards the end, there were just brief sections on small aspects of Romanian culture or history. There was no structure or themes. I was disappointed, and decided to buy a more typical "history of Romania" book to try to learn more fully about Romania, its history, and its current culture.

What I like about this collection of articles is that it doesn't make me go through it from start to finish to grasp an image about Romania and reach some final conclusion. The diversity of topics allows both an entertaining, as well as an educational read; you can get some facts straight, and as well get intrigued by Romanian society. You can immerse yourself in long pieces about past and present Romania or scan short articles on culture and civilization, ranging from the much controversial Dracula to less conventional topics that speak of a Romania less known to foreigners.

Apart from that, the author's voice and style is a common denominator that makes this book a sample of high quality Romanian journalism.

Romania explained to my friends abroad is a curious mix of more than 40 original stories full of interesting historic and cultural facts about Romania on the most diverse topics: from Romanian Gypsies to Ana Aslan's Gerovital, from the Life and Death of Ceausescu to why Romanian names end in Escu. Definitely check it out, especially if you can't quite understand why Romania is the way it is. These stories have various lengths from one page to sixty; the long ones including consistent sidebars. If you want to better understand Romania here's a good book for you

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